

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 DRC-01 /122 W

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R 291555Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO STATE WASHDC 5217

INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJ: ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY FOR
GENERAL ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY. GOG PUBLISHED DECREE AUGUST 29 PROVIDING
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS FOR ELECTIONS. MINISTER
OF INTERIOR IN ACCOMPANYING PUBLIC STATEMENT OBSERVED
GOG CONSIDERS IT HAS DUTY TO OPEN ROAD FOR RESTORATION
OF DEMOCRACY. GREEK PUBLIC IS BUZZING WITH SPECULATION
THAT PM CARAMANLIS MAY ANNOUNCE DATE FOR GENERAL
ELECTIONS DURING MAJOR SPEECH AT OPENING
THESSALONIKI FAIR. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER OF INTERIOR CHRISTOPHER STRATOS ANNOUNCED
AUGUST 29 THAT LEGISLATIVE DECREE WAS APPROVED SETTLING
VARIOUS MATTERS REGARDING ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS
FOR ELECTIONS. STRATOS SAID INASMUCH AS GOG CONSIDERS
RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE WITH OTHER
GREAT NATIONAL PROBLEMS OCCUPYING GREEKS, INSTRUCTIONS
HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO LIFT "ALL OBSTACLES WHICH COULD
DELAY EXPRESSION OF PEOPLE'S CHOICE ONCE THE REQUIRED
CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN MET." STRATOS SAID THESE
PREPARATIONS WHILE URGENT REQUIRE CEASELESS EFFORTS

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GIVEN INERTIAL OF SPIRIT AND DISRUPTION OF SERVICE

AND GOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY DURING PERIOD OF DICTATORSHIP.

3. DECREE SPECIFICALLY RESTORES VOTING RIGHTS TO THOSE STRICKEN FROM REGISTERS BY APRIL 21 REGIME, CREATES POLLING STATIONS THROUGHOUT NATION, PROVIDES CREDITS FOR ELECTION PREPARATIONS AND ESTABLISHES LEGAL SUPERVISORS FOR ELECTIONS. MINISTER STRATOS POINTED OUT THAT NATIONAL BUDGET UNDER DICTATORSHIP DID NOT PROVIDE FOR EXPENDITURES FOR ELECTIONS "SIMPLY BECAUSE NO ELECTIONS WERE EVER INTENDED." STATEMENT ENDED WITH CLARIFICATION THAT NEW DECREE IS TECHNICAL IN NATURE AND DOES NOT ESTABLISH DATE OF ELECTIONS, ELECTORAL SYSTEM OR NUMBER OF DEPUTIES.

4. COINCIDENCE OF MINISTRY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS FOR ELECTIONS WITH PRIORITY NEWS ITEM THAT PM WILL DELIVER MAJOR SPEECH ON DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES IN THESSALONIKI AUGUST 31 HAS GENERATED SPECULATION THAT CARAMANLIS MAY ANNOUNCE TIMETABLE FOR ELECTIONS, PLEBISCITE ON KING'S RETURN, OR AT LEAST STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEW PARLIAMENT.

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